

[CLICK HERE FOR JULY 28, 2005 REPORT](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR MAY 26, 2005 REPORT](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR AUGUST 18, 2005 REPORT](#)

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

12860 CROSSROADS PARKWAY SOUTH • CITY OF INDUSTRY, CALIFORNIA 91746
Tel (562) 908-8400 • Fax (562) 908-0459



BRYCE YOKOMIZO
Director

LISA NUÑEZ
Chief Deputy

July 28, 2005



Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: **SKID ROW OUTREACH STRATEGIES**
(BOARD ORDER #SYN 10 – JANUARY 11, 2005)

This is to provide your Board with the sixth and final monthly report on the Skid Row outreach strategies implemented to identify and address the immediate needs of homeless families on Skid Row. In June, 13 families were served by DPSS staff outstationed at the Weingart Access Center and by the Skid Row Outreach Team. Since implementation on January 18, 2005, a total of 358 families were served. Of these:

- 145 families were already receiving CalWORKs. Nevertheless, we were able to issue homeless services to 119 of them. (Twenty-three were denied because of ineligibility and three refused homeless services.)
- Fourteen families were referred to apply for CalWORKs. Two of them were approved, nine were denied (but referred for emergency shelter), and three did not complete the application process.
- 199 of the families contacted by the Skid Row Team declined any services. The team reports that many of these families were already connected with existing services (e.g., staying at a shelter and getting case management). For the others, despite the team's efforts to engage them at multiple times, the team was not able to break through their distrust/fear, resulting in individuals declining any services. Immigration status could have been a contributing factor for many.
- Given that the team was able to connect 146 families on Skid Row with homeless services/emergency shelter over the past six months, we are continuing the outreach efforts through September 30, 2005. Once the State Budget is adopted and we know our CalWORKs Single Allocation for FY 2005-06, we will provide your Board with our plan for continuing this program for the last three quarters of FY 05-06.

Each Supervisor
July 28, 2005
Page 2

As shared with you in May, while we will not be replicating this model Countywide, we plan to implement a similar approach to assist homeless families throughout the County. Homeless families will be served by "on-call" DPSS eligibility staff in the district offices to facilitate access to benefits and services for homeless families. LAHSA, DMH, and DCFS have agreed to work with DPSS in developing a Countywide on-call response system process as well, which will complement the on-call DPSS eligibility staff.

BY:js

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Office
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Director, Children and Family Services
Director, Mental Health
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

MONTHLY REPORT ON SKID ROW OUTREACH STRATEGIES

June 2005

	This month	Since 1/18/05
I. Referrals		
A. Number of families served		
1. Walk-ins at Weingart Access Center	3	99
2. Referred by Midnight Mission/Other Shelters	0	20
3. Referred by Skid Row Outreach Team	5	239
a. Taken to the Weingart Access Center	1	28
b. Not taken to the Weingart Access Center	4	211
4. Total (from A.1, 2 and 3)	8	358
B. Number of families already on CalWORKs	6	145
C. Number of families referred to CalWORKs	0	14
D. Contacted by Skid Row Team and declined CalWORKs referral	2	199
II. Assistance		
A. CalWORKs Applicants (from I.C)		
1. Approved and issued CalWORKs	0	2
2. Denied CalWORKs (i.e., excess income, working full-time)	0	9
a. Referred for emergency shelter	0	9
3. Not processed (client walked out)	0	3
4. Total (Same as I.C)	0	14
B. Homeless Services (from I.B)		
1. Approved and issued homeless services (Homeless Assistance)	6	119
2. Denied homeless services (not homeless, exhausted benefits)	0	23
a. Referred for emergency shelter	0	18
b. Staying with friends/relatives	0	5
3. Refused DPSS services	0	3
4. Total (Same as I.B)	6	145
III. Services		
Families who were referred to/are receiving services from:		
1. Welfare-to-Work (from I.B + II.A.1)	6	147
a. In GAIN/Employed	6	135
b. GAIN Exempt (disabled, child under one, caring for disabled relative, adult not aided, etc.)	0	24
c. Time Limited	0	4
2. Department of Mental Health (DMH):		
a. Evaluation for the CalWORKs Homeless Families Project	5	20
b. Clinical Assessment	0	52
c. Crisis Intervention	0	0
d. Psychiatric Mobile Response Team (PMRT) evaluation	0	0
3. Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS):		
a. Screened for DCFS services by Skid Row Team/Access Center	8	358
b. Child Protective Services/Hotline	1	1
c. Family Support Services (i.e., family intervention, counseling, alternative resources, etc.)	0	4
d. No services needed	7	353
IV. Outcomes of CalWORKs Families Initially Served This Month		
A. In permanent housing	0	
B. In transitional housing	0	
C. In emergency shelter/hotel/motel	6	
D. Sharing housing with friend/relative	0	
E. CalWORKs case terminated due to the following reason:	0	
1. Excess Income	0	
2. No eligible child/ren in the home	0	
3. No QR 7	0	
4. Failed annual CalWORKs redetermination	0	
5. Client's request	0	
6. Moved out of state/county	0	
F. Total (Same as II.B.4)	6	

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

12880 CROSSROADS PARKWAY SOUTH • CITY OF INDUSTRY, CALIFORNIA 91746
Tel (562) 908-8400 • Fax (562) 908-0459



BRYCE YOKOMIZO
Director



Board of Supervisors

GLORIA MOLINA

First District

YVONNE B. BURKE

Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

Third District

DON KNABE

Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

Fifth District

May 26, 2005

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: SKID ROW OUTREACH STRATEGIES
(BOARD ORDER #SYN 10 – JANUARY 11, 2005)

This is to provide your Board with the fourth monthly report on the Skid Row outreach strategies implemented to identify and address the immediate needs of homeless families on Skid Row. In April, 52 families were served by the Skid Row Outreach Team and/or DPSS staff outstationed at the Weingart Access Center, for a total of 220 families served since implementation on January 18, 2005.

Additionally, this is to provide you with a status report on all of the intervention strategies implemented since January 2005 and our plan regarding the continuation of these interventions in Fiscal Year (FY) 2005-06.

CalWORKs Homeless Families Project

This project helps CalWORKs homeless families secure permanent housing through intensive services from DMH, DPSS, and LAHSA. In December 2004, your Board authorized funding this project through June 30, 2005 to serve a total of 350 families throughout the County. To date, 241 families and 512 children are enrolled in the project. Out of the 241, 26 families have been placed in permanent housing, 43 are in transitional housing, 66 are staying with friends/relatives, 47 are staying in motels/hotels, and 59 have been placed in emergency shelters. We intend to extend our contract with LAHSA, as previously authorized by your Board, to continue funding the project through September 30, 2005. Once the State Budget is final and we have received our CalWORKs Single Allocation from the State, we will re-evaluate whether to continue funding the project through the rest of FY 2005-06.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

Each Supervisor
May 26, 2005
Page 2

Homeless Families Benefits Access Team

To facilitate access to benefits and services for homeless families, since January 18, 2005, eligibility staff have been outstationed at the Weingart Access Center in Skid Row to process applications for CalWORKs benefits and homeless services. Since implementation, staff at the Weingart Access Center have served a total of 97 families, including those families referred by the Midnight Mission or the Skid Row Outreach Team.

Given this small number of families that have been served at the Weingart Access Center (an average of one family per day), we intend to modify the current strategy in the Skid Row area and implement this modified strategy countywide. Specifically, we intend to have eligibility staff in each district office throughout the county "on call" during the work week to facilitate access to benefits and services for homeless families, similar to the protocols established with the Midnight Mission prior to implementation of the Homeless Families Benefits Access Team. This approach will provide access to benefits for homeless families which is comparable to the Benefits Access Team through a more efficient use of DPSS eligibility staff.

Skid Row Family Outreach Team

On February 15, 2005, we implemented the Skid Row Family Outreach Team to identify homeless families on Skid Row and connect them with available benefits and services. Since implementation, the team has served a total of 145 families. Although we intend to maintain this intervention in the Skid Row area, we do not intend to expand this specific approach into other areas of the county, because this approach is uniquely suited to the high density and limited size of Skid Row. Homeless families in other areas will be served by the "on call" DPSS eligibility staff in the district offices, as described above. LAHSA, DMH, and DCFS have agreed to work with us in developing a countywide on-call response system as well, which will complement the on-call DPSS eligibility staff.

Temporary Homeless Assistance Program (THAP)+14

Through this program, DPSS supplements the State's Temporary Homeless Assistance program, providing an additional 14 days of temporary emergency shelter payments. This strategy allows families two additional weeks to stay in hotels/motels while they continue to search for permanent housing. Since implementation on January 18, 2005 through March 31, 2005, a total of 1,409 families have been served, with \$591,610 in payments. We intend to continue funding this program through September 30, 2005. Once the State Budget is final and we have received our CalWORKs Single Allocation from the State, we will re-evaluate whether to continue funding this program through the rest of FY 2005-06.

Each Supervisor
May 26, 2005
Page 3

Short-Term Rental Subsidy

Effective January 18, 2005, DPSS implemented its Rental Assistance program. Under this program, families receiving Permanent Homeless Assistance or Moving Assistance can qualify for a monthly rental subsidy of up to \$250 per family (based on family size) for up to four consecutive months. As of March 31, 2005, 65 families had accessed the program, with \$13,807 in payments. Given the shortage of affordable housing in the County, we intend to continue funding this program through FY 2005-06.

Emergency Housing and Services

Effective January 11, 2005, LAHSA began providing emergency housing and services for CalWORKs homeless families, through a combination of emergency shelter beds and motel vouchers. On May 31, 2005, your Board will consider my recommendation to allocate \$750,000 to extend the current contract with LAHSA for emergency shelter and services through September 30, 2005. Once the State Budget is final and we have received our CalWORKs Single Allocation from the State, we will re-evaluate whether to continue funding this program through the remainder of FY 2005-06.

Home-Based Case Management

As confirmed by the CalWORKs Homeless Families report which I submitted to your Board on May 11, 2005, individual circumstances rather than income distinguish CalWORKs homeless families from CalWORKs families that are not homeless, indicating that case management is key in serving this population. To address these individual circumstances, a case management pilot was implemented on May 16, 2005 at the San Gabriel Valley district office. Countywide implementation is targeted for July 2005.

All CalWORKs homeless families will have a case manager to facilitate access to services, initiate referrals, and move the family out of homelessness and into permanent housing. The array of services include crisis intervention, short-term stabilization, needs assessment, employment services, and an individualized housing plan. To ensure all homeless families are screened/case managed, district office protocols are being implemented in conjunction with Home-Based Case Management.

Each Supervisor
May 26, 2005
Page 4

Screening for Endangered/At-Risk Children

To determine whether children in homeless families are endangered/at-risk, DPSS and DCFS staff developed a screening tool for this purpose. DPSS implemented use of this tool on March 1, 2005 at the Weingart Access Center and the Skid Row Family Outreach Team, and on May 16, 2005, at the Home-Based Case Management Pilot in the San Gabriel Valley district office. The screening tool will be expanded Countywide with full implementation of the Home-Based Case Managers in all CalWORKs district offices in July 2005.

Housing Counselors/Relocation Specialists

This summer, we intend to implement a pilot for contracted relocation services to assist homeless families in locating permanent, affordable housing. This staff will coordinate with our new home-based case managers, and will have primary responsibility for identifying appropriate neighborhoods and affordable housing for families, overcoming barriers to obtaining housing (e.g., poor credit and evictions), negotiating with landlords, and maintaining a database of available housing. Following the pilot, an RFP will be conducted to begin contract services countywide in early 2006.

Toll-Free Hotline for Homeless Families

With the implementation in July 2005 of the 2-1-1 toll-free number in Los Angeles County, we will add all CalWORKs homeless and housing services to the 2-1-1 process to facilitate access by homeless and at-risk families as well as homeless service providers.

Once the State Budget is adopted and we know our CalWORKs Single Allocation for FY 2005-06, we will provide your Board with our plan for these programs for the last three quarters of FY 2005-06.

BY:js

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Office
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Director, Children and Family Services
Director, Mental Health
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
Public Counsel

Attachment

MONTHLY REPORT ON SKID ROW OUTREACH STRATEGIES

April 2005

	This month	Since 1/18/05
I. Referrals		
A. Number of families served		
1. Walk-ins at Weingart Access Center	10	56
2. Referred by Midnight Mission/Other Shelters	4	19
3. Referred by Skid Row Outreach Team	38	145
a. Taken to the Weingart Access Center	7	22
b. Not taken to the Weingart Access Center	31	123
4. Total (from A.1, 2 and 3)	52	220
B. Number of families already on CalWORKs	20	94
C. Number of families referred to CalWORKs	1	13
D. Contacted by Skid Row Team and declined CalWORKs referral	31	119
II. Assistance		
A. CalWORKs Applicants (from I.C)		
1. Approved and issued CalWORKs	1	2
2. Denied CalWORKs (i.e., excess income, working full-time)	1	8
a. Referred for emergency shelter	1	8
3. Not processed (client walked out)	2	3
4. Total (Same as I.C)	6	12
B. Homeless Services (from I.B)		
1. Approved and issued homeless services (Homeless Assistance)	30	54
2. Denied homeless services (not homeless, exhausted benefits)	10	18
a. Referred for emergency shelter	9	15
b. Staying with friends/relatives	1	3
3. Refused DPSS services	1	3
4. Total (Same as I.B)	20	94
III. Services		
Families who were referred to/are receiving services from:		
1. Welfare-to-Work (from I.B + II.A.1)	29	96
a. In GAIN/Employed	10	70
b. GAIN Exempt (disabled, child under one, caring for disabled relative, adult not aided, etc.)	8	22
c. Time Limited	2	4
2. Department of Mental Health (DMH):	9	30
a. Evaluation for the CalWORKs Homeless Families Project	3	8
b. Clinical Assessment	6	22
c. Crisis Intervention	0	0
d. Psychiatric Mobile Response Team (PMRT) evaluation	0	0
3. Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS):	0	1
a. Child Protective Services/Hotline	0	0
b. Family Support Services (i.e., family intervention, counseling, alternative resources, etc.)	0	1
IV. Outcomes of CalWORKs Families		
A. In permanent housing	2	
B. In transitional housing	0	
C. In emergency shelter/hotel/motel	88	
D. Sharing housing with friend/relative	1	
E. CalWORKs case terminated due to the following reason:	0	
1. Excess Income	0	
2. No eligible child/ren in the home	0	
3. No QR 7	0	
4. Failed annual CalWORKs redetermination	0	
5. Client's request	0	
6. Moved out of state/county	0	
F. Total (Same as II.B.4)	91	

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

12860 CROSSROADS PARKWAY SOUTH • CITY OF INDUSTRY, CALIFORNIA 91746
Tel (562) 908-8400 • Fax (562) 908-0459



BRYCE YOKOMIZO
Director

LISA NUÑEZ
Chief Deputy



Board of Supervisors

GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

August 18, 2005

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: **ACTION PLAN TO REDUCE CalWORKs WELFARE-TO-WORK
SANCTIONS**

On April 13, 2005, I informed your Board that DPSS would develop an Action Plan through a collaborative process to reduce sanctions based on the report, "Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles: Who, When, and Why?" This memo describes that collaborative process and transmits the resulting Action Plan.

Background

As you will recall, the report "Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles: Who, When, and Why?" was conducted in response to the need identified by the Commission for Public Social Services for systemic information on welfare sanctions in Los Angeles County. A few of the key findings in the report which are addressed in the Action Plan are:

- Almost two-thirds of sanctioned Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) participants are sanctioned before participating in any welfare-to-work activity, primarily for failure to attend orientation.
- The most prevalent reasons identified for this failure to participate are lack of adequate transportation and child care and failure to receive notifications in a timely manner.

Planning Process

In response to the study findings, my Department has developed an Action Plan, through a collaborative process involving managers from throughout DPSS and key partners from other County departments, service providers, advocates, and the Commission for Public Social Services. Our goal was to bring together all pertinent groups to think beyond current standard operating procedures and develop creative solutions to the issues identified in the study.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

To begin the process, in March 2005, a cross-cutting group of DPSS managers began meeting to review the preliminary draft of the study and identify potential actions that DPSS could implement in response to the findings. This group became the Internal Workgroup.

In May 2005, a Partners Workgroup was convened with representatives from the Commission for Public Social Services' Committee for Review and Evaluation of CalWORKs (CORE), advocates, service providers and DPSS managers to review the key findings and the suggested actions by the DPSS Internal Workgroup, as well as brainstorm additional solutions. The membership of the Partners Workgroup is set forth on Attachment A.

From May-July, information was regularly exchanged between the Partners Workgroup and the Internal Workgroup. Through this process, a consensus was achieved and the attached Action Plan was developed. The Partners Workgroup will continue discussions on additional items not listed in the Action Plan until a resolution is achieved.

Action Plan

The Action Plan identifies key research findings, the actions DPSS will take to address the issues, the rationale for each proposed action, and the projected time frame for the implementation of each action. Implementation has already begun on some of the actions contained in the Plan. The Action Plan is Attachment B.

The actions outlined in the plan offer a wide variety of solutions. Some actions involve modifications to the process through which DPSS staff interact with participants, while others involve modifications to automated systems. Still other actions focus on increasing access to short-term child care, or additional training, or tools for GAIN staff.

As a package, these actions represent a comprehensive approach to increasing welfare-to-work participation and reducing sanctions. We are committed to embracing and conveying a philosophy in the GAIN Program, which focuses on maximizing participation in welfare-to-work activities, to enable participants to reach their full potential, find employment and become self-sufficient.

Reports to the Board

I will submit an initial progress report on implementation of the Action Plan to your Board in six months and will subsequently provide you with quarterly progress reports.

BY:pa

Enclosures

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Commission for PSS - CORE

**GAIN SANCTION STUDY
PARTNERS' WORKGROUP**

Phil Ansell, Director Bureau of Program and Policy Department of Public Social Services	Vance Martin, Chief Division IV Department of Public Social Services
Yolanda Arias, Directing Attorney Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles	Kate Meiss, Staff Attorney Neighborhood Legal Services
Grace Cainoy, Executive Director Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles	Dan Miller, Director GAIN Division Los Angeles County Office of Education
Lori Cruz, Deputy Director Branch Operations Child Support Services Department	Manuel Moreno, Ph.D., Project Director Service Integration Branch Los Angeles County Chief Administrative Office
Dolores Daniel, Program Manager Service Area 4 & CalWORKs DPSS Co-Located/GROW Programs Mental Health Department	Christina Nguyen, Chief Information Technology Division Department of Public Social Services
Gail Dershewitz, Chief Research, Evaluation & Quality Assurance Division Department of Public Social Services	Margaret Quinn, Chief CalWORKs Division Department of Public Social Services
Luther Evans, Chief Human Resources Division Department of Public Social Services	Alfred Ramirez, Assistant Director CalWORKs Glendale Community College
Russ Hibbs, Chief Eligibility Systems Division Department of Public Social Services	Maria Rodriguez, HSA III-in-Charge GAIN Program Division Department of Public Social Services
Leonard Schneiderman, Ph.D Commission for Public Social Services	

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

- I. **RESEARCH FINDING:** Almost two-thirds of sanctioned GAIN participants are sanctioned when they fail to show up for their Orientation session.

ACTIONS

- A. The Home Interview Program (HIP) Eligibility Worker (EW) will interact with applicants during the Intake process in order to explain the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) process including information on their orientation appointment, child care, transportation, good cause, and potential exemptions.

Providing a participant with one-on-one information on the WtW process during Intake will assist the participant in understanding the program components, participation requirements and the relevance of not participating.

Mid-Term Goal

- B. Provide at least one designated GAIN Services Worker (GSW), or Contracted Case Manager (CCM) to assist participants with scheduling and rescheduling their Orientation appointment.

Providing a designated GSW/CCM will enable participants to engage in GAIN by receiving assistance either with scheduling or rescheduling an Orientation appointment for a date which is convenient to them.

Mid-Term Goal

- C. Eliminate automated recycling of participants through Orientation when they fail to return a completed QR7 on time or have a late redetermination, but subsequently submit the required documentation before termination of the CalWORKs grant actually takes effect.

Delaying deregistration from GAIN will provide time for the GAIN participant to submit documentation required to retain CalWORKs eligibility, while continuing to participate in GAIN or re-engage in a GAIN activity without having to be processed through GAIN orientation.

Short-Term Goal

- D. Ensure reported changes on participant's phone/address are updated on LEADER/GEARS as quickly as possible in order for the participant to receive a timely Orientation appointment letter.

Ensuring address changes are in LEADER/GEARS as quickly as possible will alleviate the problem of participants not receiving their appointment letters timely.

Short-Term Goal

- E. An automated letter will be sent to the participant in a timely manner giving the participant time to keep the appointment.

Changing the time frame from seven working days to ten working days prior to the Orientation appointment date will provide the participant with additional time to receive the appointment notice and make the necessary arrangements to attend Orientation.

Short-Term Goal

*Note: Goals are defined as follows:

Short-Term	1-4 months
Mid-Term	5-8 months
Long-Term	9+ months

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

- I. RESEARCH FINDING:** Almost two-thirds of sanctioned GAIN participants are sanctioned when they fail to show up for their Orientation session.

ACTIONS

- F. Participants who are nearing the end of their exemption period will be contacted by a designated GSW/CCM in each region to discuss the need for further exemption and/or participation in GAIN.**

Providing a designated GSW in each region will enable participants to receive the immediate information they need to participate in Orientation, or receive an appropriate, expeditious exemption.

Short-Term Goal

- G. Create flexible appointments for those who are working part-time or are students so that they can attend Orientation and Appraisal (OAP). In addition, if attending OAP conflicts with a participant's school schedule and the participant is being approved for a Self-Initiated Program (SIP), OAP may be scheduled at the convenience of the participant or may be bypassed.**

Many participants who want to attend Orientation have conflicts because they are working or are in school; providing flexible appointments will allow them to do so.

Short-Term Goal

- H. Provide the incentive of having a "Drawing" at OAP. GAIN participants that complete OAP will be entered in a drawing and if selected will win gift certificates.**

Incentives can help motivate participants to attend Orientation and continue in GAIN.

Mid-Term Goal

- I. Conduct home call to non-compliant GAIN participants to assess for good cause and exemption qualifications in order to resolve compliance problems before a sanction is recommended.**

The purpose of this intervention is to assist participants in resolving issues/barriers related to the non-compliance and re-engage participants in GAIN activities.

Short-Term Goal

- J. Each GSW/CCM, will telephone each participant assigned to them to remind them of their OAP appointment.**

Calling participants before their OAP appointments will enable GSWs/CCMs to motivate and provide assistance on removing child care and transportation barriers that may preclude attendance at OAP.

Short-Term Goal

- K. Participants re-entering GAIN that have attended OAP in the last twelve months will receive a specialized letter and individual appointment time instead of the standard group OAP appointment time.**

Individual appointments for re-entering participants will provide GSWs/CCMs with the time needed to provide appropriate attention and services.

Mid-Term Goal

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

- II. RESEARCH FINDING:** Evidence indicates communication issues between CalWORKs and GAIN staff, between LEADER and GEARS, between staff and participants, between participants and systems, which impede GAIN participation and contribute to sanctions.

ACTIONS

- A. Provide additional access to automated CalWORKs eligibility information for GSWs/CCMs.**

By being able to access this eligibility information, GSWs/CCMs will be able to more quickly ascertain the status of a participant's case, employment or if other circumstances exist so a sanction should not be recommended.

Long-Term Goal

- B. Improve information to participant by providing the names and tasks of EW and GSW/CCM.**

Providing the names and tasks of the assigned EW and GSW to participants anytime one of the workers is changed will help to eliminate the confusion participants have in knowing whom to report information and whom to call to resolve issues.

Mid-Term Goal

- C. Provide staff with training regarding working together as a team with a common end result as well as customer service training.**

EWs and GSWs have the same common goal: to ensure participants in the WtW program succeed and obtain employment. Working together as a team as well as providing good customer service will facilitate that goal.

Mid- Long-Term Goal – Various Actions

- D. GSWs will be given improved access to EWs. They may contact them at any time, not just during phone hours.**

This will allow better communication which will assist the GSW/CCM in providing appropriate services to participants.

*Short term Goal-New procedures
Long-Term Goal- Phone system changes*

- E. Schedule meetings between Eligibility and GAIN managers to discuss the ideas already identified by line staff to enhance communication between CalWORKs and GAIN staff. Ensure that line staff has input to this process.**

Engaging CalWORKs eligibility and GAIN managers and staff in identifying ways to enhance communication between CalWORKs eligibility and GAIN/ Contracted staff will result in the most effective set of actions to achieve the goal of enhanced communication.

Short-Term Goal

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

- II. RESEARCH FINDING:** Evidence indicates communication issues between CalWORKs and GAIN staff, between LEADER and GEARS, between staff and participants, between participants and systems.

ACTIONS

- F. End 1st, 2nd, and 3rd instance financial sanctions, without a GSW review, when DPSS receives a PA 1934, CalWORKs Treatment/Services Verification Form, from a specialized supportive services provider confirming that the participant is actively engaged in a Specialized Supportive Services activity.**

The participant's supportive services need may have contributed to the participant's failure to comply, and the participant may not have felt comfortable disclosing that they were receiving mental health, substance abuse, or domestic violence services to DPSS staff.

Mid-Term Goal

- G. Develop and train staff on an explicit CalWORKs/GAIN program philosophy which emphasizes active participation in employment, education/training, specialized supportive services and other welfare-to-work activities, (rather than sanctioning), as the key means to achieve the goal of self-sustaining employment.**

Having an explicit program philosophy will help all CalWORKs/GAIN staff and contractors focus their efforts on achieving the goals of the program. The training will include good cause and exemptions as well as prevention of inappropriate sanctions.

*Short-Term Goal-Develop philosophy
Long-Term Goal- On-going training*

- H. To assure that deregistered, sanctioned GAIN participants are given clear directions, and are properly assisted when they call to "cure" their sanction, a regionalized, centralized GSW will be assigned to assist them and:**

- Better instructions will be provided to GSWs/CCMs on how to assist deregistered, sanctioned participants,
- All GSWs/CCMs and EWs will have the phone number listing of all of the designated GSWs/CCMs,
- More information on how to cure sanctions will be provided on the PA 125, Monthly Notice to GAIN Participants Currently in Sanction Status, along with the phone number of the designated GSW/CCM.

Participants will be able to "cure" their sanctions expeditiously when additional instructions are provided.

Short-Mid-Term Goal - Various Actions

- I. Increase interaction between EWs and GSWs/CCMs to facilitate a more coordinated case management system. Pertinent information will be shared in order to provide participants with the most beneficial and appropriate services.**

More frequent interactions between CalWORKs eligibility and GAIN staff will help to enhance communication.

Long-Term Goal

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

II. RESEARCH FINDING: Evidence indicates communication issues between CalWORKs and GAIN staff, between LEADER and GEARS, between staff and participants, between participants and systems.

J. Identify current key CalWORKs and GAIN documents that are not specifically mandated as written by the State. Contract with a readability expert to review the forms as well as future forms, for clarity and appropriate grade level.

Participants indicated that they were unclear about why they were sanctioned and how to cure a sanction. Providing clearer information will reduce this problem.

Long-Term Goal

K. Modify and implement distribution of the WTW 26, Good Cause Determination Guidelines, and the WTW 27, Request for Good Cause Determination. The WTW 26, which provides information on "good cause," will be sent to non-compliant participants before they are sanctioned and the WTW 27, which provides information on how they can request "good cause" to cure a sanction, will be sent to sanctioned participants.

Participants are not always aware they have may have "good cause" for not participating in GAIN, or how "good cause" can be applied to curing their sanction.

Mid-Term Goal

L. DPSS and the Los Angeles Office of Education (LACOE) will develop a pilot to call participants prior to Job Club to remind them to attend.

LACOE staff may be able to motivate participants to attend Job Club by personally calling them.

Short-Term Goal

M. Translate all GAIN forms sent to GAIN participants into the threshold languages.

Translating all forms will ensure participants receive information in notices that are in their native language which will facilitate comprehension.

Long-Term Goal

N. Provide Welfare-to-Work brochure to participants that do not receive a visit from the HIP worker.

Participants that are employed or exempted from GAIN will not receive a visit from the HIP worker but may benefit from the information in the Welfare-to-Work brochure.

Mid-Term Goal

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

III. RESEARCH FINDING: Use of services, such as child care and transportation, reduces the risk of being sanctioned by 40 percent.

ACTIONS

- A. Facilitate use of child care and transportation services by providing information during the Intake process. The HIP worker will provide information and will assist the participant with accessing child care and transportation.**

Providing information and assisting the participant with child care and transportation during the intake process will help the participant prepare for Orientation.

Mid-Term Goal

- B. Provide participants with access to Child Care Coordinators in each CalWORKs District office prior to Orientation in order to find out how to access child care.**

Providing an additional resource on how to access child care before Orientation will help to ensure participants are able to make child care arrangements for Orientation.

Mid-Term Goal

- C. Develop a pilot, where DPSS will purchase child care slots at DPSS employee child care centers that are in close proximity to GAIN Regional offices, for use by children of GAIN participants during OAP appointments.**

Having pre-arranged child care slots available will assist participants that are not able to find one-day child care for orientation.

Mid-Term Goal

- D. Develop a pilot which will provide money for a one-day bus pass (\$3.00), for transportation in advance of the OAP appointment. The money can be used for gas in lieu of a bus pass, if appropriate.**

Providing participants with money for transportation before Orientation will reduce transportation as a barrier to attending Orientation.

Long-Term Goal

- E. DPSS will work with the Resource and Referral Agencies to develop a system to identify and provide referrals to GAIN participants for licensed child care providers that are willing to provide one-day or very short-term child care if they have a vacant space.**

Identifying providers that can provide short-term child care will assist participants with child care arrangements for OAP and other short-term WtW activities.

Mid-Term Goal

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

<p>IV. <u>RESEARCH FINDING:</u> Sanction rates vary substantially among GSWs/CCMs, indicating an inconsistent approach to case management.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ACTION</p>
<p>A. Produce reports that identify number of sanctions by GSW.</p> <p><i>Identifying staff with higher sanction rates than the average for GSWs/CCMs will allow managers to focus on determining if issues exist for specific staff.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Short-Term Goal</i></p>
<p>V. <u>RESEARCH FINDING:</u> Some participants are not happy with components of the GAIN flow, particularly Orientation and Job Club.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ACTIONS</p>
<p>A. Improve Orientation process by providing more information to participants about GAIN and GAIN services that are available. Materials will be updated with new program requirements.</p> <p><i>Giving participants more information that is potentially beneficial to them will encourage Orientation attendance and increase satisfaction.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Short-Mid-Term Goal- Various Actions</i></p>
<p>B. Identify more participants who would not benefit from Job Club and allow them to bypass the process to do vocational training or other welfare-to-work activities. This may include limited English proficient participants and participants who have previously attended Job Club.</p> <p><i>By evaluating participants on a more case-by-case basis for Job Club and allowing those who would not benefit from Job Club to bypass the process, GSWs/CCMs can increase participant satisfaction.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Mid- Term Goal</i></p>
<p>VI. <u>RESEARCH FINDING:</u> Participants who complete Job Club and subsequently receive training and participants in Self-Initiated Programs (SIPs) are less likely to be sanctioned than participants who only complete Job Club.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ACTIONS</p>
<p>A. Increase numbers of participants referred pre- and post-assessment to vocational training, paid work experience and education.</p> <p><i>Individuals that obtain higher level of skills or education are more likely to earn a better wage and less likely to be sanctioned.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Long-Term Goal</i></p>

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

VII. RESEARCH FINDING: Many individuals who are sanctioned need procedures that will facilitate the curing of their sanction.

ACTIONS

A. At least one GSW/CCM in each GAIN Region will be designated to receive calls from deregistered, sanctioned GAIN participants and will assist them with the actions that need to be taken to cure the sanction.

Providing a centralized GSW/CCM in each region will enable participants to receive the immediate information needed to cure their sanction.

Short-Term Goal

B. GSWs/CCMs will interact with sanctioned participants when they come to the CalWORKs district office for their annual redetermination appointment in order to re-engage participants in the WtW process, subject to the availability of GSWs in the CalWORKs district offices for this activity. The first priority of the GSWs in the district offices is to assist homeless CalWORKs participants.

This additional contact with participants will encourage some to cure their sanction and participate in the welfare-to-work program.

Mid-Term Goal

C. Conduct home call to sanctioned participants. This includes re-engaging sanctioned participants in WtW activities.

The purpose of this intervention is to assist participants in resolving issues/barriers related to the sanction and re-engage participants in GAIN activities.

Short-Term Goal

VIII. Other Actions to Prevent and/or Reduce Sanctions.

ACTIONS

A. DPSS will establish a system with Specialized Supportive Service Providers and GSWs/CCMs to ensure participants that are actively engaged in specialized supportive services do not have compliance/sanction initiated and/or implemented.

Automation changes to flag the participants who are receiving Specialized Supportive Services will eliminate them from being sanctioned.

Mid-Term Goal

B. Action will be taken so that participants who are employed full-time are not sanctioned.

Automation changes to flag the participants who are employed full-time will eliminate them from being sanctioned.

Mid-Term Goal

Study of Sanctions Among CalWORKs Participants in the County of Los Angeles

Action Plan

VIII. Other Actions to Prevent and/or Reduce Sanctions.

ACTIONS

- C. Secure a business consultant to review the processes in the GAIN program, including contractors, for the goal of facilitating participation.**

Obtaining outside, objective evaluation of the GAIN processes may facilitate participation in the various WtW activities.

Long-Term Goal

- D. Prevent sanctions for homeless participants, since State law grants homeless participants good cause for non-participation.**

Automation changes to flag the participants who are homeless will prevent them from being sanctioned.

Mid-Term Goal

- E. Ensure review of the 30 Day Delinquent reports by WtW staff to ensure participants are assigned to the appropriate activity.**

Active utilization of this report will help ensure that participants are not spending time in the program without being assigned to an activity.

Short-Term Goal

- F. Explore the feasibility of reducing GSW caseloads for designated WtW population/activities and addressing such reduced caseloads in the budget.**

Reducing designated caseloads would provide GSWs/CCMs more one-on-one time for interaction with participants which would permit more individual attention to resolving participants' barriers.

Long-Term Goal